GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3999
ANSWERED ON:09.04.2003
ISSUANCE OF FRESH LICENCES TO PRIVATE OPERATORS
NANDIPAKU VENKATASWAMY

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications have proposed to issue fresh licences to private parties for starting mobile telephone services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the matter regarding issue of fresh licences for operating mobile services has been referred to TRAI;

(d) if so, whether the TRAI has given its recommendations on this issue; and

(e) if so, the action taken/ proposed to be taken on the recommendations of TRAI?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI S MAHAJAN)

(a)to (c): Sir, fresh tenders for grant of 14 Licences for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) to fill up vacant slots in 8 Telecom Circles (Andaman-Nicobar & West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, J&K, North East, Orissa, UP East, UP West) were invited on 10.02.2003 Although, 7 companies had purchased the tender document but none of the companies submitted their bid. In addition, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was requested to give their recommendations for grant of additional licences for CMTS in terms of New Telecom Policy- 1999, which, interalia, stipulates that the entry of more operators in a Service Area shall be based on the recommendations of TRAI who will review this as required and no later than every two years.

(d) TRAI have in their response dated 20.02.2003, interalia, expressed its opinion that induction of Mobile Service Providers in various Service Areas can be considered if there is adequate availability of spectrum for the existing Service Providers as well as for the new players, if permitted. TRAI have also stated that it is of utmost importance to ensure adequate quality of service inthis fast growing segment of the market.

(e) A decision in the matter will be taken in due course.